

TWIN CITIES AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Minutes

Non-motorized Subcommittee Meeting

October 19, 2009

8:00 A.M.

Abonmarche, 95 W. Main St., Benton Harbor, MI 49022

TWINCATS COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT:	Chris Cook, City of Benton Harbor (Abonmarche Consultants) William Fryer, City of St. Joseph Larry Merritt, St. Joseph Charter Township / Merritt Engineering Dick Stauffer, Lincoln Charter Township
SWMPC STAFF PRESENT:	Nickolas Musson Anna Rahtz Suzann Flowers

1. CALL TO ORDER & INTRODUCTIONS:

- Subcommittee Chairman Cook called the meeting to order at 3:00 P.M.

2. REVIEW STRUCTURE/PURPOSE FOR SUBCOMMITTEE:

- Those present reviewed a document drafted by SWMPC transportation planners outlining the potential purpose and structure of the subcommittee.
- The purpose includes:
 - To review studies, plans, and projects already completed for non-motorized transportation in the Twin Cities Area;
 - To identify specific objectives/priorities for non-motorized transportation in the Twin Cities area;
 - To create specific strategies for implementing those priorities; and
 - To communicate with surrounding areas in the region to ensure regional connectivity.

3. DETERMINE OTHER PARTNERS TO BE INVOLVED:

- It was stated that all communities represented in TwinCATS should also be represented in the subcommittee. Those missing from the list at this point include Stevensville, Berrien County, and the Michigan Department of Transportation.
- It was also suggested that press releases be put out to get grassroots support, and that a web page specifically for the non-motorized subcommittee should be put on the SWMPC website listing the names of the subcommittee members. Rahtz and Flowers agreed to work on the web page and send press releases once the subcommittee gets to the point of being ready for public input.
- Rahtz added that the subcommittee needs some kind of catchy name or branding, since not many people know what "non-motorized transportation" means.
- It was mentioned that there should be representation on the subcommittee from: biking groups and cycle shops (specifically Randy Rood and Mike Jones), the We Can Healthy Berrien Coalition, the Niles-Buchanan-Cass Area Transportation Study, the Berrien County Parks Department, and the Three Oaks Spokes group.

4. DETERMINE PROCESS:

- Merritt suggested that the subcommittee should be reviewing the projects that are already being passed through TwinCATS to see if they are giving consideration to non-motorized needs.
- It was mentioned that if the subcommittee is going to encourage communities to implement non-motorized projects, it will have to help them find funding and assess the available rights-of-way.
- It was discussed that different types of non-motorized facilities are appropriate for different types of users, and so the subcommittee should keep different types of facilities in mind. For example, even if a 10-foot-wide off-road pathway is available for families to walk and bike on, a serious cyclist should still have an on-road bike lane. Rahtz explained that off-road facilities, while ideal for recreational non-

motorized activities, are not always the most appropriate facility for non-motorized users to get from Point A to Point B as a mode of transportation. The destinations that people need are located on the road, and road users want to take a safe but also direct and convenient route to reach the destination.

5. REVIEW AVAILABLE NON-MOTORIZED STUDIES:

- Rahtz passed out packets with maps and studies that had already been done of non-motorized facilities in the Twin Cities area. They dated from 1999 to 2005 and need to be updated.
- Musson mentioned that there is a written inventory of non-motorized facilities in the TwinCATS 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan, but not maps.
- Flowers explained that SWMPC is currently working on a [nine-county non-motorized plan and mapping project for the SMART \(Southwest Michigan Alliance for Regional Trails\) task force](#). She stated that a public input meeting would be held for Berrien County within the next few months, and that the purpose of that meeting will be to gather data on what non-motorized facilities are existing, planned, proposed, and desired throughout the county. Maps will be compiled following that public input meeting.
- It was decided that since the subcommittee needs the maps that will be available after the public input meeting, the subcommittee should wait until after that meeting to proceed.
- In the time until that meeting, the subcommittee members will work on outreach to get the right people at the table at the next meeting.

9. ADJOURNMENT: 4:00 p.m.

- Next meeting date and location TBD.

Compiled by: SWMPC staff, 2/25/10